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FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT

LS 6246

BILL NUMBER: HB 1336

NOTE PREPARED: Nov 19, 2007

BILL AMENDED:

SUBJECT: County Government Reorganization.

FIRST AUTHOR: Rep. Thompson

FIRST SPONSOR:

BILL STATUS: As Introduced

FUNDS AFFECTED: **GENERAL**
 DEDICATED
 FEDERAL

IMPACT: Local

Summary of Legislation: This bill has the following provisions.

County Commissioners or County Executive: The bill requires county election boards in counties not having a consolidated city to place a public question on the ballot at the November 2008 general election to allow the voters of each county to determine whether: (1) the county executive and the county legislative body in the county should be an elected board of county commissioners; or (2) the board of county commissioners of the county should be eliminated, the county executive should be an elected chief executive officer, and the county council should be the county legislative body as well as the county fiscal body. The bill also provides that in a county in which the voters have voted in favor of having a county chief executive officer: (1) the initial county chief executive officer shall be elected for a four-year term at the November 2010 general election; (2) all powers and duties of the county that are executive or administrative in nature shall be exercised or performed by the chief executive officer; and (3) all powers and duties of the county that are legislative in nature shall be exercised or performed by the county council functioning as the county legislative body. It provides that the current statute allowing the county council to act as the legislative body in certain counties expires in 2011.

County Finance Department or County Auditor: The bill requires county election boards in counties not having a consolidated city to place a public question on the ballot at the November 2008 general election to allow the voters of each county to determine whether: (1) a county finance department should be established in the county to assume the powers and duties currently held by the county auditor, the county treasurer, and the county assessor; or (2) the county auditor, the county treasurer, and the county assessor should retain their powers and duties. It provides that if the voters of a county choose to have a county finance department: (1) the county executive shall appoint a county controller to be the fiscal officer of the county and serve as the

head of the county finance department; (2) the county controller has the duties and powers assigned by statute to the county auditor, county treasurer, and county assessor; (3) the county auditor, county treasurer, and county assessor no longer have those powers; and (4) the office of county assessor is abolished.

County Departments or County Recorder and County Surveyor: The bill requires county election boards in counties not having a consolidated city to place a public question on the ballot at the November 2008 general election to allow the voters of each county to choose whether: (1) the county executive shall determine the county departments and employees that will be responsible for carrying out powers and duties assigned by statute to the county recorder and county surveyor; or (2) the county recorder and county surveyor should retain their powers and duties. The bill also provides that if the voters of a county choose to have the county executive make the determination: (1) the county executive shall determine the departments and employees that have those powers and duties; and (2) the county recorder and county surveyor no longer have those powers and duties.

Coroner Training: It requires the Coroners Training Board to prescribe a minimum basic training course for coroners. It also requires each coroner to successfully complete the minimum basic training course for coroners not later than six months after taking office. The bill provides that if a coroner does not successfully complete the minimum basic training course, the county shall withhold the paycheck of the coroner and may not compensate the coroner until the coroner successfully completes the course.

Effective Date: July 1, 2008.

Explanation of State Expenditures: The bill will have no fiscal on the Coroners Training Board which under current law adopts rules to, among other things, set standards for continuing education and training for county coroners. Under the bill, the Board would prescribe a minimum basic training course for coroner.

Explanation of State Revenues:

Explanation of Local Expenditures: The bill would have indeterminate fiscal impact. If voters vote in favor of replacing several elected offices with appointed employees, costs for county elections may be reduced. Also, if county government works more effectively or efficiently with the replacement of elected officials, administrative costs could be reduced. However, the savings achieved will vary based on the reorganization undertaken.

Coroner Training: The bill would have indeterminate fiscal impact on counties. If the coroner does not pass the minimum basic training program set by the Coroners Training Board, the county would withhold the coroner's paycheck and could not compensate the coroner until the course is passed.

Background on Election Expenses: Expenses to run an election include precinct election board per diem, preparation of ballots (if optical-scan voting systems are used), rental of a facility for polling (if necessary), and/or voting equipment (if necessary). For the 2004 general election, optical-scan ballots cost \$0.29 per ballot or \$290 per one thousand ballots. Based on a small sample of Indiana counties, per diem for election board members ranges from \$65 to \$150 for inspectors and from \$40 to \$100 for judges, clerks, and sheriffs.

Explanation of Local Revenues:

State Agencies Affected: Coroners Training Board.

Local Agencies Affected: County councils, auditors, recorders, surveyors in counties without consolidated cities, county coroners.

Information Sources:

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